

Essays, Series II, vol. ii. p. 20) an extraordinary genealogy is given representing Adam as the father of Seth, Seth of "Nûrchaya," Nûrchaya of Sang-yang Wênang Sang-yang Wênang of Sang-yang Tunggal, Sang-yang Tunggal of Guru, and Guru of Sangyang Sambu, Brahamma, Mahadewa, Bisnu, and Dewi Sëri. It is impossible to do much with this genealogy except to notice that "Guru" is treated as distinct from the "Mahadewa," another name for Siva. Thus Guru is represented as the father of the Hindu Trinity, and also of Sambu (whom I cannot identify) and Sëri, who is the Hindu Sri, the goddess of grain and therefore a deity of immense importance to the old Javanese and Malays' "Sri" is the goddess invoked in another invocation in the *Selangor Journal* article of the 22nd February, 1895; where the Pawang addresses the padi:

- "Lagi di dalam Shurga  
 "Bernama buah khaldi (?)  
 "Sampai ka-dunya bernama  
 "Buah Sëri, tënyang Sëri."  
 "Jangan rosak jangan binasakan  
 "Buah Sëri, tënyang Sëri."

To this passage Mr. Skeat adds a note: "The Sëri fruit "may mean the blessed fruit (in the ordinary sense of Sëri or Sri) "and be given as a euphonious title to padi, but it reminds one "strangely of 'Ceres,' the goddess of grain."

R. J. W.

### **Calanthe vestita Lindl. in Selangor.**

This well-known and popular orchid has rather a remarkable distribution, being found in Tenasserim and Borneo, and it might well be expected to occur somewhere in the intermediate region, especially in limestone districts. It does not occur, so far as is known in the Lankawi islands, where it might have been expected, being replaced there by the pretty *C. rubens* Ridl., but I found a single plant in a crevice in a tree on the top of the limestone rocks at the Kuala Lumpur caves (Gua batu). It was in perfect flower in December, and was a very fine form. The upper part of these rocks is in many places quite inaccessible, and indeed it is in but few places one can get

to the top. The flora there is very different from anything we have even at the lower part of the cliffs, and in many respects is similar to that of the limestone rocks of the Lankawi islands.

In recording this discovery of a connecting link between two regions so far apart as Tenasserim and Borneo, I may mention another, *viz.* that of *Dendrobium heterocarpum* Wall, (*D aureum* Lindl.) which was known to occur in India (Nepal, Assam, Malabar and Ceylon), in Java, and the Philippine islands, and which has recently been found by Mr. A. B. Stephens in Perak, on the Thaiping hills.

H. N. R.

### Boriah.

In part II. of Clifford and Swettenham's Malay-English Dictionary, under the head of BORIAH, I find *Boriah*,

بوریه. A topical song. *Bácha boriah* باج بوریه. To sing a topical song.

No derivation of the word is given. The use of the word is chiefly confined to the pantomimes or mimic plays which are acted by Malays in Penang Town during the month of Muharam. It is of Persian origin, according to Forbes, and means a "mat" in Hindustani. The following account of the word which I have received from an Indian in Penang will throw some light on the subject, as I believe, fanciful derivations of the word have been suggested.

"The plain meaning of the word Boriah in the Hindustani and Deccan language is a place of prayer (praying carpet), and in Malay they call it *Tikar* (a mat). Formerly in the year 1845, the 21st Regiment was transferred from Madras to Penang. The Muhammedans of the Regiment used to be given ten days' leave in the month of Muharram for the purpose of mourning for the grandsons of the prophet. These military men used to form parties and sing songs of mourning. For instance, representing four persons, Nanak Shah, Jogi Majnun, Balva Ghaghri, and Boria, they used to dress up in clothes made of mats and mourn for Husain, and used to recite the following piece of poetry—